(d) An Inter-Ministerial Central Team visited the Bundelkhand areas and some tehsils in Allahabad district of Uttar Pradesh in the 4th week of January, 2008, to study the drought like situation in these areas with a view to assessing the ground situation and the scale of implementation of various medium-term and long-term drought mitigation programmes/ schemes and to recommend strategy and various measures that are required for agriculture development suitable for the areas to ameliorate the current situation. Further action would be taken after receipt of the Team's report.

(e) National Agricultural Insurance Scheme is applicable in Uttar Pradesh, including Bundelkhand areas. However, crops/areas to be covered are notified by the State Government.

Justifiable prices for agricultural produce

†796. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that how to get farmers justifiable prices for their produce, is not a matter of priority for Government;

(b) whether it is also a fact that despite all Government announcements/packages farmer suicides continue unabated; and

(c) if not, the details of efforts and achievements made by Government in getting farmers lucrative price for their produce?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) The Government's price policy for agricultural commodities seeks to ensure remunerative prices to the farmers for their produce with a view to encourage higher investment and production, and to safeguard the interest of consumers by making available supplies at reasonable prices. The price policy also seeks to evolve a balanced and integrated price structure in the perspective of the overall needs of the economy.

The Government decides on the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for various agricultural commodities taking into account the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), the views of State Governments and Central Ministries as well as such other relevant factors which are considered important for fixation of support prices. The CACP, while formulating its recommendations on price policy considers a number of important factors which includes cost of production.

The causes for suicide by farmers, as reported by the State Governments, are broadly crop failure, indebtendness, drought, social and economic insecurity. The Government being sensitive to the difficulties of the farming community, the Union Budget for 2008-09 has proposed, especially for the small and marginal farmers, a scheme of debt waiver and debt relief.

Unending farm tragedy

797. PROF. M.S. SWAMINATHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.